

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Claims 1-19 (Cancelled)

20. (Currently Amended) The hitch mechanism as set forth in Claim ~~23~~ 34, wherein said hitch connector further comprises:

adjustment means interconnecting said first hinge means to said tow bar means of the towed vehicle for permitting transverse adjustment of said tow bar means of the towed vehicle with respect to said mounting bar means of the towing vehicle so as to permit transverse positional adjustment of the towed vehicle with respect to the towing vehicle.

Claims 21-23 (Cancelled)

24. (Currently Amended) The hitch mechanism as set forth in Claim ~~23~~ 34, further comprising:

first mounting bracket means [fixedly mounted upon] operatively connected to said tow bar means for permitting said hitch connector to be operatively connected to said tow bar means;

second mounting bracket means fixedly mounted upon said mounting bar means for permitting said hitch connector to be operatively connected to said mounting bar means;

said hitch connector comprises a pair of vertically spaced parallel plates;

said first hinge means disposed at said first end portion of said hitch connector comprises a first pair of vertically stacked collar members respectively connected to first end portions of said pair of vertically spaced parallel plates of said hitch connector;

said second hinge means disposed at said second end portion of said hitch connector comprises a second pair of vertically stacked collar members respectively connected to second end portions of said pair of vertically spaced parallel plates of said hitch connector;

first fastener means pivotally connecting said first pair of vertically stacked collar members to said first

mounting bracket means fixedly mounted upon said tow bar means; and

second fastener means pivotally connecting said second pair of vertically stacked collar members to said second mounting bracket means fixedly mounted upon said mounting bar means.

25. (Previously Inserted) The hitch mechanism as set forth in Claim 20, wherein said adjustment means further comprises:

a pair of longitudinally spaced, transversely extending rods;

a universal ball assembly mounted upon said tow bar means of the towed vehicle; and

fastener means operatively connected to said universal ball assembly and adjustably connected to said pair of longitudinally spaced, transversely extending rods so as to permit said transverse adjustment of said tow bar means of the towed vehicle with respect to said mounting bar means of the towing vehicle so as to permit said transverse positional adjustment of the towed vehicle with respect to the towing vehicle.

26. (Previously Inserted) The hitch mechanism as set forth in Claim 25, wherein:

said universal ball assembly comprises an upstanding externally threaded rod member and an internally threaded nut member for threaded engagement with said upstanding externally threaded rod member; and

said fastener means comprises a pair of mounting plates which are respectively interposed between said upstanding externally threaded rod member and said internally threaded nut member, which are slidably mounted upon said pair of longitudinally spaced, transversely extending rods, and which are fixedly secured at any one of a plurality of transversely spaced positions defined along said transversely extending rods as a result of the tightened threaded engagement defined between said internally threaded nut member and said upstanding externally threaded rod member.

27. (Cancelled)

28. (Currently Amended) The combination as set forth in Claim ~~27~~ 35, further comprising:

first mounting bracket means [fixedly mounted upon] operatively connected to said tow bar means for permitting said hitch connector to be operatively connected to said tow bar means;

second mounting bracket means fixedly mounted upon said mounting bar means for permitting said hitch connector to be operatively connected to said mounting bar means;

said hitch connector comprises a pair of vertically spaced parallel plates;

said first hinge means disposed at said first end portion of said hitch connector comprises a first pair of vertically stacked collar members respectively connected to first end portions of said pair of vertically spaced parallel plates of said hitch connector;

said second hinge means disposed at said second end portion of said hitch connector comprises a second pair of vertically stacked collar members respectively connected to second end portions of said pair of vertically spaced parallel plates of said hitch connector;

first fastener means pivotally connecting said first pair of vertically stacked collar members to said first

mounting bracket means fixedly mounted upon said tow bar means; and

second fastener means pivotally connecting said second pair of vertically stacked collar members to said second mounting bracket means fixedly mounted upon said mounting bar means.

29. (Currently Amended) The combination as set forth in Claim ~~27~~ 35, wherein said hitch connector further comprises:

adjustment means interconnecting said first hinge means to said tow bar means of said towed vehicle for permitting transverse adjustment of said tow bar means of said towed vehicle with respect to said mounting bar means of said towing vehicle so as to permit transverse positional adjustment of said towed vehicle with respect to said towing vehicle.

30. (Previously Inserted) The combination as set forth in Claim 29, wherein said adjustment means further comprises:

a pair of longitudinally spaced, transversely extending rods;

a universal ball assembly mounted upon said tow bar means of the towed vehicle; and

fastener means operatively connected to said universal ball assembly and adjustably connected to said pair of longitudinally spaced, transversely extending rods so as to permit said transverse adjustment of said tow bar means of the towed vehicle with respect to said mounting bar means of the towing vehicle so as to permit said transverse positional adjustment of the towed vehicle with respect to the towing vehicle.

31. (Previously Inserted) The combination as set forth in Claim 30, wherein:

said universal ball assembly comprises an upstanding externally threaded rod member and an internally threaded nut member for threaded engagement with said upstanding externally threaded rod member; and

said fastener means comprises a pair of mounting plates which are respectively interposed between said up-

standing externally threaded rod member and said internally threaded nut member, which are slidably mounted upon said pair of longitudinally spaced, transversely extending rods, and which are fixedly secured at any one of a plurality of transversely spaced positions defined along said transversely extending rods as a result of the tightened threaded engagement defined between said internally threaded nut member and said upstanding externally threaded rod member.

32. (Previously Inserted) The combination as set forth in Claim ~~27~~ 35, wherein:

said towed vehicle comprises a wheeled vehicle upon which conveyor means are mounted for conveying, discharging, and depositing temporary raised pavement markers (TRPMs) onto a roadway surface; and

said towing vehicle comprises a roadwork vehicle for towing said towed vehicle along the roadway surface so as to permit the temporary raised pavement markers (TRPMs) to be applied into the roadway surface at locations predeterminedly spaced along the roadway surface.



33. (Previously Inserted) The combination as set forth in Claim 32, wherein:

said towed vehicle comprises wheel applicator means for engaging each one of the temporary raised pavement markers (TRPMs) disposed upon the roadway surface so as to apply each one of the temporary raised pavement markers (TRPMs) disposed onto the roadway surface.

34. (New) A hitch mechanism for interconnecting a towed vehicle to a towing vehicle, comprising:

tow bar means for fixation upon a towed vehicle so as to permit the towed vehicle to be towed by a towing vehicle when the towed vehicle is operatively connected to the towing vehicle;

mounting bar means for fixation upon a towing vehicle so as to permit the towing vehicle to tow the towed vehicle when the towing vehicle is operatively connected to the towed vehicle; and

a hitch connector operatively interconnecting said tow bar means of the towed vehicle to said mounting bar means of the towing vehicle;

said hitch connector comprising a longitudinally extending linear member having first hinge means disposed at a first end portion of said longitudinally extending linear member for hingedly connecting said hitch connector to said tow bar means of the towed vehicle, and second hinge means disposed at a second end portion of said longitudinally extending linear member for hingedly connecting said hitch connector to said mounting bar of the towing vehicle whereby said first and second hinge means of said hitch connector permit the towed vehicle to be elevationally movable independently of the towing vehicle.

35. (New) In combination, a towed vehicle, a towing vehicle, and a hitch mechanism for interconnecting the towed vehicle to the towing vehicle, comprising:

a towed vehicle;

a towing vehicle;

tow bar means fixedly mounted upon said towed vehicle for permitting said towed vehicle to be towed by said towing vehicle when said towed vehicle is operatively connected to said towing vehicle;

mounting bar means fixedly mounted upon said towing vehicle for permitting said towing vehicle to tow said towed vehicle when said towing vehicle is operatively connected to said towed vehicle; and

a hitch connector operatively interconnecting said tow bar means of said towed vehicle to said mounting bar means of said towing vehicle;

said hitch connector comprising a longitudinally extending linear member having first hinge means disposed at a first end portion of said longitudinally extending linear member for hingedly connecting said hitch connector to said tow bar means of the towed vehicle, and second hinge means disposed at a second end portion of said longitudinally extending linear member for hingedly connecting said hitch connector to said mounting bar of the towing vehicle whereby said first and second hinge means of said hitch connector permit the towed vehicle to be elevationally movable independently of the towing vehicle.